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## SOMETHING WANTING.

WHEN people speak of the high civilisation attained in the British islands, they seem to be forgetful that social improvement has not by any means reached the whole people—that our boasted civilisation, with its many wonderful manifestations, is in reality only a piece of diversified patchwork—refinement and rags, grandeur and starvation. City life has its eddy corners, where poverty nestles, and vice may be said to be a matter of business; and to these obscurities, the eulogist of modern civilisation may occasionally give a passing glance, and satisfy himself that what he sees is incurable.

But besides these urban horrors—which, by the way, give one but a poor idea of social tendencies—there is something equally grievous, but which, being not quite in the everyday walk of the public, appears to be generally unknown, and at best engages the smallest degree of notice. This something is a historical curiosity. These islands were invaded and settled by a people of advanced intelligence many centuries ago. The Anglo-Saxon race have had Great Britain in their hands for more than a thousand years; and latterly this race has made more marvellous efforts at improvement than any other. Now here is the curious thing. The country which the Anglo-Saxons have appropriated and made a chosen seat of their skill they have not yet endorsed with their language nor induced to comprehend their institutions. Till this instant there are spots of no inconsiderable extent where the inhabitants are scarcely advanced from a period of primitive rudeness, and who in their vernacular tongue, their dwellings and modes of living, offer a fair specimen of a state of things five hundred years ago. An indignant compassion is excited by the maltreatment of Cherokees, and other cheated and dispossessed tribes of aborigines in North America; but who looks nearer home, and pities or attempts to rectify the condition of the aborigines of these islands? What are the social characteristics of this unfortunate people? They do not understand English, and continue to speak a language which is utterly useless as regards external intercourse; they cannot be said to know anything of regular industry, or the obligations of modern economy; their houses are for the greater part mere hovels of stone and turf, destitute of windows or chimney; in the same apartment in which they eat and sleep, pigs or cattle eat and sleep also; their whole apparatus of cooking consists of one or two utensils; their fire is made on the damp earthen floor without a grate; subsisting, like the lower animals, principally on roots grown near their wretched dwellings, they are alto-

gether unacquainted with food and luxuries of foreign origin; if they know of tea, coffee, and sugar, it is only by hearsay; few of the women and children wear shoes; and as for school-education, books, newspapers, the arts of reading and writing, and consequently knowledge of the external world—all is a blank.

That this is no unreal picture any one may convince himself by travelling into the more remote parts of Ireland, and the Highlands and islands of Scotland. Yes, within a forty-eight hours' journey of London or Edinburgh, such scenes may be realised. Indeed, within six hours of Glasgow, habitations windowless and chimneyless may any day be seen. The following graphic account of what is observable on the west coast of Ireland is given by Dr Wilde:—"Shortly after the British Association met in Dublin in 1835 we spent a week in the island of Achill, and there witnessed some scenes and modes of life which it could scarcely be credited were passing at one end of this small kingdom, while at the other the savans of Europe and America were met to discourse on science. There are several villages in Achill, particularly those of Keeme and Keele, where the huts of the inhabitants are all circular or oval, and built for the most part of round, water-washed stones, collected from the beach, and arranged, without lime or any other cement, exactly as we have good reason to suppose the habitations of the ancient Firbolgs were constructed; and very similar to many of the ancient monastic cells and oratories of the fifth and sixth centuries, which religious veneration and the wild untrodden situations where they are located have still preserved in this country. Those of our readers who have ever passed the Minaune or Goat's Track, on the towering cliff that rises above the village of Keele, with the glorious prospect of Clew Bay and the broad swell of the western Atlantic before them, and have looked down upon the pigmy dwellings, resembling an Indian wigwam, scattered over the beach beneath, may call to mind the scene we describe. During the spring, the entire population of several of the villages we allude to in Achill close their winter dwellings, tie their infant children on their backs, carry with them their *loys*, and some corn and potatoes, with a few pots and cooking utensils, drive their cattle before them, and migrate into the hills, where they find fresh pasture for their flocks; and there they build rude huts, or summer-houses, of sods and wattles, called *booleys*, and then cultivate and sow with corn a few fertile spots in the neighbouring valleys. They thus remain for about two months of the spring and early

\* The Beauties of the Boyne, &c. by W. R. Wilde. M<sup>rs</sup> Glashan, Dublin.

summer, till the corn is sown; their stock of provisions being exhausted, and the pasture consumed by their cattle, they return to the shore, and eke out a miserable and precarious existence by fishing, &c. No further care is ever taken of the crops; indeed they seldom even visit them, but return in autumn, in a manner similar to the spring migration, to reap the corn and afford sustenance to their half-starved cattle. With these people it need scarcely be wondered that there is annually a partial famine.

It is only when the calamity of a general famine, caused by the failure of the potato crop, attracts attention, that the country at large hears of this desperately-abject state of affairs; and even then curiosity expires in a momentary compassion. A charitable dole is a salvo for permanent negligence. But surely even for the sake of public decency, the subject should engage more serious consideration. We boast of being a great people—that our race is spreading civilisation over distant continents. Our wealth, our learning, our literature, the extent of our empire—are matters of universal gratulation. All very well for those in the full enjoyment of these blessings; but of what earthly consequence is this magnificence to that portion of our population who live almost like the lower animals, and whose world is confined to the small horizon of their native wilderness?—who, in point of fact, never see an intelligent countenance unless it be that of the humble minister of religion—to them the only minister of mercy—the single link that connects them with human society, and lets them know that they have a destiny different from their fellow-lodgers, the brutes!

Society cannot shake itself clear of the charge of cruelly neglecting these people. It is no apology to say that, according to the rules of modern polity, each man must look after himself. We take a somewhat different view of social obligation. When serfdom was abolished, and all were thrown upon their own resources, it was the duty of the state to see that all were prepared for this great change in their condition. It did no such thing. It took no pains to instruct them—left them a wreck, without the power of shifting from the spot on which they had stranded: and there are the wrecks of an old state of things, surviving even till past the middle of the nineteenth century. Dating from the period of general manumission, what strides in human discovery have been made! A new world added to the old; arts and sciences advanced the most extraordinary lengths. Yet there, hulking in the bosom of civilisation, are seen hordes of people as far back as ever. From the Atlantic to the Pacific, a great continent is becoming covered with thriving and populous cities—settlements advancing into the wilds at the rate of twenty miles per annum; and, wonderful to tell—here, in these small islands, with their boasted mission to civilise and take the world by storm, there continue to live great numbers of people who have not got the length of speaking the common vernacular, and who, to all appearance, will go on living in their deplorable half-furnished barbarism to the end of time.

Nothing but the interposition of the state can remedy this gross social blunder. For the most part landlords are not to blame; neither is it in their power to cure the wretchedness that prevails. The whole thing must be viewed comprehensively, as a national misfortune. In the first place, it is a scandalous shame for the state to have so long left the country without such a system of education as would make sure of at least teaching every child to speak and read the English tongue. What a grand thing for a minister to have perilled his place upon, would a proposal for such a scheme of instruction have been! Let this, then, be remedied without loss of time—or England, with thy boasts, be for ever dumb! Next, there must be a humane system of removal, where it appears to be wanted; removal to

regions where subsistence is sure to follow the most ordinary kinds of industry. How preposterous for thousands of families to be fixed among rocks, bogs, and not less dreary islands, on a tempestuous coast, where there is no demand for labour, and the soil is incapable of affording sufficient nourishment; while at the same time, within a few weeks' sail, there are spread out lands, genial and productive, comparatively unoccupied, and so large that if the whole population of the United Kingdom were transferred to them, they would make little perceptible impression. Let this also be remedied with as little delay as may be. We rejoice that the aboriginal Irish are leaving a country in which they were apparently placed at a disadvantage, and where their presence is at least suggestive of unpleasant historical associations. Let all who are able, hurry off and disperse themselves amid new scenes, richly abounding in possibilities of comfort, and become at the same time denizens of that great western community which is going ahead with race-horse celerity, and which, in a brief space of time, will be by far the most powerful nation in the world—a nation of a hundred millions of free and enlightened people. And would it not be well to help away those who lack the means of transit? Loans on favourable conditions have already been extended to Highland proprietors, to enable them to rid their lands of a superfluous population; but much more might be done as regards all parties. Ships of war could be somewhat better employed than either rotting at Portsmouth or performing holiday evolutions in the Mediterranean. They would stand good stead as transports in carrying across the sea those who are totally destitute of means of their own, and who are at present a sheer burden, not to say a disgrace, to the community. In a word, Emigration and Education are two things which, on various grounds, are required for the abatement of a lamentable and growing evil. From the ill-considered manner in which emigration on a wholesale plan has hitherto been conducted, we mention it in the present instance with some misgivings. Yet it is surely within the bounds of possibility to effect the translation of those masses, and settle them in fields of enterprise courting their residence. Considered in a right spirit, there would be no insurmountable difficulty in the execution. At all events, the present posture of affairs is far from creditable, and almost anything would be better than doing that which indifference might be inclined to recommend—nothing!

#### CLARA CORSINI.

A YOUNG French traveller, named Ernest Leroy, on arriving at Naples, found himself during the first few days quite confused by the multitude of his impressions. Now as it was in search of impressions that he had left his beloved Paris, there was nothing, it should seem, very grievous in this; and yet in the midst of his excitement there occurred intervals of intolerable weariness of spirit—moments when he looked upon the Strada Toledo with disgust, wished himself anywhere but in San Carlos, sneered at Posillipo, pool-pooched Vesuvius, and was generally sceptical as to the superiority of the Bay over the Bosphorus, which he had not seen. All this came to pass because he had set out on the principle of travelling in a hurry, or, as he expressed it, making the most of his time. Every night before going to bed he made out and wrote down a programme of next day's duties—assigning so many hours to each sight, and so many minutes to each meal, but forgetting altogether to allow himself any opportunity for repose or digestion.

Thus he had come from Paris *via* Milan, Florence, and Rome, to Naples—the whole in the space of three weeks, during which, as will be easily imagined, he had visited an incredible number of churches, galleries,

temples, and ruins of every description. In order to profit as much as possible by his travels he had arranged beforehand five or six series of ideas, or meditations as he called them: one on the assistance afforded by the fine arts to the progress of civilisation; another consisting of a string of sublime commonplaces on the fall of empires and the moral value of monumental history; and so on. Each of these meditations he endeavoured to recall on appropriate occasions; and he never had leisure to reflect, that for any instruction he was deriving from what he saw he might as well have stopped at home. However, having some imagination and talent, he frequently found himself carried away by thoughts born of the occasion, and so irresistibly, that once or twice he went through a whole gallery or church before he had done with the train of ideas suggested by some previous sight, and was only made aware that he had seen some unique painting or celebrated windows of stained glass by the guide claiming payment for his trouble, and asking him to sign a testimonial doing justice to his civility and great store of valuable information. It is only just to state that M. Ernest never failed to comply with either of these demands.

When, however, as we have said, he had been two or three days in Naples, and had rushed over the ground generally traversed by tourists, our young traveller began to feel weary and disgusted. For some time he did not understand what was the matter, and upbraided himself with the lack of industry and decline of enthusiasm, which made him look forward with horror to the summons of Giacomo, his guide, to be up and doing. At length, however, during one sleepless night the truth flashed upon him, and in the morning, to his own surprise and delight, he mustered up courage to dismiss Giacomo with a handsome present, and to declare that that day at least he was resolved to see nothing.

What a delightful stroll he took along the sea-shore that morning with his eyes half-closed lest he might be tempted to look around for information! He went towards Portici, but he saw nothing except the sand and pebbles at his feet, and the white-headed surf that broke near at hand. For the first time since his departure from Paris he felt light-minded and at ease; and the only incident that occurred to disturb his equanimity was when his eyes rested for half a second on a broken pillar in a vine-garden, and he was obliged to make an effort to pass by without ascertaining whether it was of Roman date. But this feat once accomplished, he threw up his cap for joy, shouted '*Victoire!*' and really felt independent.

He was much mistaken, however, if he supposed it to be possible to remain long in the enjoyment of that *dolce far niente*, the first savour of which so captivated him. One day, two days passed, at the end of which he found that while he had supposed himself to be doing nothing, he had in reality made the great and only discovery of his travels—namely, that the new country in which he found himself was uninhabited, and that too by people who, though not quite so different from his countrymen as the savages of the South Sea Islands, possessed yet a very marked character of their own worthy of study and observation. Thenceforward his journal began to be filled with notes on costume, manners, &c.; and in three weeks, with wonderful modesty, after combining the results of all his researches, he came to the conclusion that he understood nothing at all of the character of the Italians.

In this humble state of mind he wandered forth one morning in the direction of the castle of St Elmo, to enjoy the cool breeze that came wafting from the sea, and mingled with and tempered the early sunbeams as they streamed over the eastern hills. Having reached a broad, silent street, bordered only by a few houses and gardens, he resolved not to extend his walk farther, but sat down on an old wooden bench under the shade of a platane-tree that drooped over a lofty wall. Here he remained

some time watching the few passengers that occasionally turned a distant corner and advanced towards him. He noticed that they all stopped at some one of the houses farther down the street, and that none reached as far as where he sat; which led him first to observe that beyond his position were only two large houses, both apparently uninhabited. One, indeed, was quite ruined—many of the windows were built up or covered with old boards; but the other shewed fewer symptoms of decay, and might be imagined to belong to some family at that time absent in the country.

He had just come to this very important conclusion when his attention was diverted by the near approach of two ladies elegantly dressed, followed by an elderly serving-man in plain livery carrying a couple of mass-books. They passed him rather hurriedly, but not before he had time to set them down as mother and daughter, and to be struck with the great beauty and grace of the latter. Indeed so susceptible in that idle mood was he of new impressions, that before the young lady had gone on more than twenty paces he determined that he was in love with her, and by an instinctive impulse rose to follow. At this moment the serving-man turned round, and threw a calm but inquisitive glance towards him. He checked himself, and affected to look the other way for awhile, then prepared to carry out his original intention. To his great surprise, however, both ladies and follower had disappeared.

An ordinary man would have guessed at once that they had gone into one of the houses previously supposed to be uninhabited, but M. Ernest Leroy must needs fancy, first, that he had seen a vision, and then that the objects of his interest had been snatched away by some evil spirit. Mechanically, however, he hurried to the end of the street, which he found terminated in an open piece of ground, which there had not been time for any one to traverse. At length the rational explanation of the matter occurred to him, and he felt for a moment inclined to knock at the door of the house that was in best preservation, and complain of what he persisted in considering a mysterious disappearance. However, not being quite mad, he checked himself, and returning to his wooden bench, sat down, and endeavoured to be very miserable.

But this would have been out of character. Instead thereof he began to feel a new interest in life, and to look back with some contempt on the two previous phases of his travels. With youthful romance and French confidence he resolved to follow up this adventure, never doubting for a moment of the possibility of ultimate success, nor of the excellence of the object of his hopes. What means to adopt did not, it is true, immediately suggest themselves; and he remained sitting for more than an hour gazing at the great silent house opposite until the unpleasant consciousness that he had not breakfasted forced him to beat a retreat.

We have not space to develop—luckily it is not necessary—all the wild imaginings that fluttered through the brain of our susceptible traveller on his return to his lodgings, and especially after a nourishing breakfast had imparted to him new strength and vivacity. Under their influence he repaired again to his post on the old wooden bench under the platane-tree, and even had the perseverance to make a third visit in the evening; for—probably because he expected the adventure to draw out to a considerable length—he did not imitate the foolish fantasy of some lovers, and deprive himself of his regular meals. He saw nothing that day; but next morning he had the inexpressible satisfaction of again beholding the two ladies approach, followed by their respectable-looking servant. They passed without casting a glance towards him; but their attendant this time not only turned round, but stopped, and gazed at him in a manner he would have thought impertinent on another occasion. For the moment, however, this was precisely what he



wanted, and without thinking much of the consequences that might ensue, he hastily made a sign requesting an interview. The man only stared the more, and then turning on his heel, gravely followed the two ladies, who had just arrived at the gateway of their house.

'I do not know what to make of that rascally valet,' thought Ernest. 'He seems at once respectable and hypocritical. Probably my appearance does not strike him as representing sufficient wealth, otherwise the hopes of a fair bribe would have induced him at any rate to come out and ask me what I meant.'

He was of course once more at his post in the afternoon; and this time he had the satisfaction of seeing the door open, and the elderly serving-man saunter slowly out, as if disposed to enjoy the air. First he stopped on the steps, cracking pistachio-nuts, and jerking the shells into the road with his thumb; then took two or three steps gently towards the other end of the street; and at last, just as Ernest was about to follow him, veered round and began to stroll quietly across the road, still cracking his nuts, in the direction of the old wooden bench.

'The villain has at length made up his mind,' soliloquised our lover. 'He pretends to come out quite by accident, and will express great surprise when I accost him in the way I intend.'

The elderly serving-man still came on, seemingly not at all in a hurry to arrive, and gave ample time for an examination of his person. His face was handsome, though lined by age and care, and was adorned by a short grizzled beard. There was something very remarkable in the keenness of his large gray eyes, as there was indeed about his whole demeanour. His dress was a plain suit of black, that might have suited a gentleman; and if Ernest had been less occupied with one idea he would not have failed to see in this respectable domestic a prince reduced by misfortune to live on wages, or a hero who had never had an opportunity of exhibiting his worth.

When this interesting person had reached the corner of the bench he set himself down with a slight nod of apology or recognition—it was difficult to say which—and went on eating his nuts quite unconcernedly. As often happens in such cases, Ernest felt rather puzzled how to enter upon business, and was trying to muster up an appearance of condescending familiarity—suitable, he thought, to the occasion—when the old man, very affably holding out his paper-bag that he might take some nuts, saved him the trouble by observing: 'You are a stranger, sir, I believe?'

'Yes, my good fellow,' was the reply of Ernest in academical Italian; 'and I have come to this country'—

'I thought so,' interrupted the serving-man, persisting in his offer of nuts, but showing very little interest about Ernest's views in visiting Italy—'by your behaviour.'

'My behaviour!' exclaimed the young man a little nettled.

'Precisely. But your quality of stranger has hitherto protected you from any disagreeable consequences.'

This was said so quietly, so amiably, that the warning or menace wrapped up in the words lost much of its bitter savour; yet our traveller could not refrain from a haughty glance towards this audacious domestic, on whom, however, it was lost, for he was deeply intent on his pistachios. After a moment Ernest recovered his self-possession, remembered his schemes, and drawing a little nearer the serving-man, laid his hand confidentially on the sleeve of his coat, and said: 'My good man, I have a word or two for your private ear.'

Not expressing the least surprise or interest, the other replied: 'I am ready to hear what you have to say, provided you will not call me any more your good man. I am not a good man, nor am I your man, without offence be it spoken. My name is Alfonso.'

'Well, Alfonso, you are an original person, and I will not call you a good man, though honesty and candour be written on your countenance. (Alfonso smiled, but said nothing.) But listen to me attentively, remembering that though neither am I a good man, yet am I a generous one. I passionately love your mistress.'

'Ah!' said Alfonso with anything but a benevolent expression of countenance. Ernest, who was no physiognomist, noticed nothing; and being mounted on his new hobby-horse, proceeded at once to give a history of his impressions since the previous morning. When he had concluded, the old man, who seemed all benevolence again, simply observed: 'Then it is the younger of the two ladies that captivated your affections in this unaccountable manner?'

'Of course,' cried Ernest; 'and I beseech you, my amiable Alfonso, to put me in the way of declaring what I experience.'

'You are an extraordinary young man,' was the grave reply; 'an extraordinary, an imprudent, and, I will add, a reckless person. You fall in love with a person of whom you know nothing—not even the name. This, however, is, I believe, according to rule among a certain class of minds. Not satisfied with this, you can find no better way of introducing yourself to her notice than endeavouring to corrupt one whom you must have divined to be a confidential servant. Others would have sought an introduction to the family; you dream at once of a clandestine intercourse'—

'I assure you'—interrupted Ernest, feeling both ashamed and indignant at these remarks proceeding from one so inferior in station.

'Assure me nothing, sir, as to your intentions, for you do not know them yourself. I understand you perfectly, because I was once young and thoughtless like you. Now listen to me. In that house dwells the Contessa Corsini, with her daughter Clara; and if these two persons had no one to protect them but themselves and a foolish old servitor, whom the first corner judges capable of corruption, they would ere this have been much molested; but it happens that the Count Corsini is not dead, and inhabiteth with them, although seldom coming forth into the public streets. What say you, young man, does not this a little disturb your plans?'

'In the first place,' replied Ernest, 'I am offended that you will persist in implying—more, it is true, by your manner than your words—that my views are not perfectly avowable.'

'Then why, in the name of Heaven, do you not make yourself known to the count, stating your object, and asking formally for his daughter's hand?'

'Not so fast, Alfonso. It was necessary for me to learn, as a beginning, that there was a count in the case.'

'And what do you know now? Perhaps those women are two adventurers, and I a rascal playing a virtuous part in order the better to deceive you.'

'You do not look like a rascal,' said Ernest quite innocently. At which observation the old man condescended to laugh heartily, and seemed from that moment to take quite a liking to his new acquaintance. After a little while, indeed, he began to give some information about the young Clara, who, he said, was only sixteen years of age, though quite a woman in appearance, and not unaccomplished. As to her dowry—Ernest interrupted him by saying that he wished for no information on that point, being himself rich. The old man smiled amiably, and ended the conversation by requesting another interview next day at the same hour, by which time he said he might have some news to tell.

Ernest returned home in high spirits, which sank by degrees, however, when he reflected that as Alfonso declined favouring any clandestine correspondence, there was little in reality to be expected from him.

True, he had given him some information, and he might now, by means of his letters of introduction, contrive to make acquaintance with the count. But though he spent the whole evening and next morning in making inquiries, he could not meet with any one who had ever even heard of such a person. 'Possibly,' he thought, 'the old sinner may have been laughing at me all the time, and entered into conversation simply with the object of getting up a story to divert the other domestics of the house. If such be the case, he may be sure I shall wreak vengeance upon him.'

In spite of these reflections, he was at his post at the hour appointed, and felt quite overjoyed when Alfonso made his appearance. The old man said that a plan had suggested itself by which he might be introduced into the house—namely, that he should pretend to be a professor of drawing, and offer his services. Ernest did not inquire how Alfonso came to know that he was an amateur artist, but eagerly complied with the plan, and was instructed to call on the following morning, and to say that he had heard that a drawing-master was wanted.

He went accordingly, not very boldly, it is true, and looking very much in reality like a poor professor anxious to obtain employment. The contessa, who was yet young and beautiful, received him politely, listened to his proposals, and made no difficulty in accepting them. The preliminaries arranged, Clara was called, and, to Ernest's astonishment, came bounding into the room like a great school-girl, looked him very hard in the face, and among the first things she said, asked him if he was not the man she had seen two mornings following sitting opposite the house on the bench under the platane-tree.

Now Ernest had imagined to himself something so refined, so delicate, so fairy-like, instead of this plain reality, that he all at once began to feel disgusted, and to wish he had acted more prudently. And yet there was Clara, exactly as he had seen her, except that she had exchanged the demure, conventional step adopted by ladies in the street for the free motions of youth; and except that, instead of casting her eyes to the earth, or glancing at him sideways, she now looked towards him with a frank and free gaze, and spoke what came uppermost in her mind. Certes, most men would have chosen that moment to fall in love with so charming a creature; for charming she was beyond all doubt, with large, rich, black eyes, pouting ruby lips, fine oval cheeks, and a mass of ebony hair; but Ernest's first impression was disappointment, and he began to criticise both her and everything by which she was surrounded.

He saw at once that there was poverty in the house. The furniture was neat, but scanty; and the door had been opened by a female servant, who had evidently been disturbed from some domestic avocations. The contessa and her daughter were dressed very plainly—far differently from what they had been in the street; and it was an easy matter to see that this plainness was not adopted from choice but from necessity. Had Clara come into the room with a slow, creeping step, keeping her eyes modestly fixed on the chipped marble floor, not one of these observations would have been made: the large, dreary house would have been a palace in Ernest's eyes; but his taste was a morbid one, and in five minutes after he had begun to give his lesson, he began to fear that the conquest he had so ardently desired would be only too easy.

There was something, however, so cheerful and fascinating in Clara's manner that he could not but soon learn to feel pleasure in her society; and when he went away he determined, instead of starting off for Sicily, as he had at first thought of doing, to pay at least one more visit to the house in the character of drawing-master. Alfonso joined him as he walked slowly homeward, and asked him how things had

passed. He related frankly his impressions, to which the old man listened very attentively without making any remark. At parting, however, he shook his head, saying that young men were of all animals the most difficult to content.

Next day, when Ernest went to give his lesson, he was told by Alfonso that the contessa, being indisposed, had remained in bed, but that he should find Clara in the garden. There was something romantic in the sound of this, so he hurried to the spot indicated, impatient to have the commonplace impressions of the previous day effaced. This time his disgust was complete. He found Clara engaged in assisting the servant-maid to wring and hang out some clothes they had just finished washing. She seemed not at all put out by being caught thus humbly employed; but begging him to wait a little, finished her work, ran away, dressed somewhat carefully, and returning, begged he would accompany her to the house. He followed with cheeks burning with shame: he felt the utmost contempt for himself because he had fallen in love with this little housewife, and the greatest indignation against her for having presumed, very innocently, to excite so poetical a sentiment; and, in the stupidity of his offended self-love, resolved to revenge himself by making some spiteful remark ere he escaped from a house into which he considered that he had been regularly entrapped. Accordingly, when she took the pencil in hand, he observed that probably she imagined that contact with soap-suds would improve the delicacy of her touch. Clara did not reply, but began to sketch in a manner that proved she had listened to the pedantic rules he had laid down on occasion of the previous lesson more from modesty than because she was in want of them. Then suddenly rising without attending to some cavil he thought it his duty to make, she went to her piano, and beginning to play, drew forth such ravishing notes that Ernest, who was himself no contemptible musician, could not refrain from applauding enthusiastically. She received his compliments with a slight shrug of the shoulders, and commenced a song that enabled her to display with full effect the capabilities of her magnificent voice. The soap-suds were forgotten; and Ernest's romance was coming back upon him: he began to chide himself for his foolish prejudices; and thought that, after all, with a little training, Clara might be made quite a lady. Suddenly, however, she broke off her song, and turning towards him with an ironical smile said: 'Not bad for a housemaid, Mr Professor—is it?'

He attempted to excuse himself, but he was evidently judged; and, what was more—not as an obscure drawing-master, but as M. Ernest Leroy. His identity was evidently no secret; and she even called him by his name. He endeavoured in vain to make a fine speech to apologise for his ill-behaviour; but she interrupted him keenly, though good-humouredly, and the entrance of Alfonso was fatal to a fine scene of despair he was about to enact. Clara upon this retired with a profound salute; and Alfonso spoke with more of dignity than usual in his manner, and said: 'My young friend, you must excuse a little deception which has been practised on you, or rather which you have practised upon yourself. I am going to be very free and frank with you to-day. I am not what you take me for. I am the Count Corsini, a Roman; and because I have not the means of keeping a man-servant, when the women of my family go to church I follow them, as you saw. This is not unusual among my countrymen. It is a foolish pride I know; but so it is. However, the matter interests you not. You saw my daughter Clara, and thought you loved her. I was willing, as on inquiry I found you to be a respectable person, to see how you could agree together; but your pride—I managed and overheard all—has destroyed your chance. My daughter will seek another husband.'

There was a cold friendliness in Alfonso's tone which roused the pride of Ernest. He affected to laugh, called himself a foolish madcap, but hinted that a splendid marriage awaited him if he chose on his return to Paris; and went away endeavouring to look unconcerned. The following morning he was on board a vessel bound for Palermo, very sea-sick it is true, but thinking at the same time a great deal more of Clara than he could have thought possible had it been predicted.

Some few years afterwards Ernest Leroy was in one of the *salons* of the Faubourg St Germain. Still a bachelor, he no longer felt those sudden emotions to which he had been subject in his earlier youth. He was beginning to talk less of sentiments present and more of sentiments passed. In confidential moods he would lay his hand upon his waistcoat—curved out at its lower extremity, by the by, by a notable increase of substance—and allude to a certain divine Clara who had illuminated a moment of his existence. But he was too discreet to enter into details.

Well, being in that *salon*, as we have said, pretending to amuse himself, his attention was suddenly drawn by the announcement of Lady D—. He turned round, probably to quiz *la belle Anglaise* he expected to behold. What was his astonishment on recognising in the superb woman who leaned on the arm of a tall, military-looking Englishman, the identical Clara Corsini of his youthful memories. He felt at first sick at heart; but, taking courage, soon went up and spoke to her. She remembered him with some little difficulty, smiled, and holding out her alabaster hand said gently: 'Do you see any trace of the soap-suds?' She had never imagined he had any feeling in him, and only knew the truth when a large, round tear fell on the diamond of her ring. 'Charles,' said Ernest awhile afterwards to a friend, 'it is stifling hot and dreadfully stupid here. Let us go and have a game of billiards.'

#### GRASS-CLOTH OF CHINA.

SOME time ago we called attention by a paragraph in this Journal to a fabric known as the grass-cloth of China, specimens of which are not unfrequently seen in this country, although the history of its production is involved to some extent in obscurity. The paragraph alluded to was limited to a detail of some observations made on the subject by Dr Cleghorn, H.E.I.C.S., at the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, held in Edinburgh last year; but the writer of these remarks having been since furnished with much additional information from various sources—though chiefly through the kindness of Dr Cleghorn—is thus enabled to present in the following paper a complete account of the history of the grass-cloth and the plant which produces it, a coloured drawing of which is published by Sir William Hooker in the 'Kew Garden Miscellany' for August 1851.

Although the *Tchou ma*, or Chinese flax, is only beginning to be known in Europe at the present time, and the cultivation of the plant has scarcely been attempted except in our botanic gardens, yet it must not be supposed that the fabric is new in China, whence it has reached us. Dr Macgowan states, that it has been used in China during a period of more than 4100 years, and the natives are so wedded to it that they will not employ linen as a substitute. Indeed there seems small inducement for them to do so, seeing that the delicate fibre of the *Tchou ma* forms the flax from which the 'finest of the Chinese linen fabrics' are manufactured; and that the substance, in the hands of European manufacturers, will—according to M. Stanislas Julien, a French authority—be made into a tissue as soft as silk, and as fine as, but stronger and tougher than the best French cambric. In this country the grass-cloth

is usually seen in the form of handkerchiefs and shirts; but in the East it is extensively used as an article of dress both in China and British India, being from its strength and fineness peculiarly adapted for clothing during the hot season. Samples of this substance, exhibiting a fine silky tissue, were amongst the products of Chinese industry which were exhibited a few years ago in the Rue St Laurent; and very fine specimens, imported by English merchants, may be seen in the Chinese department of the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park.

The grass-cloth is the produce of *Boehmeria* (*Urtica*) *nivea*, belonging to the *Urticaceæ* or nettle family. Although the common nettle of our own country has been long known to possess various economical qualities, and amongst others to yield a strong fibre suitable for manufacturing purposes,\* yet we were scarcely prepared to admit this family of uninviting plants to the high position in an economical point of view which the extensive use of the *Boehmeria* flax shews it to be entitled to.

The notices of this plant by European botanists have been hitherto very scanty. Koempfer in 1712 alluded to the *Sjro*, or wild hemp-nettle, which, he says, 'makes good in some measure what want there is of hemp and cotton, for several sorts of stuffs, fine and coarse, are fabricated of it;†' and the plant to which he refers in these remarks is probably the same as the one now under consideration—a supposition which is confirmed by the fact, that Thunberg, seventy-two years later (1784), gives the same vernacular name to *Urtica nivea*,‡ which he notices for its valuable fibres. James Cunningham, in writing to Plukenet, mentioned the suitability of the cloth for summer-clothing, for which it is still held in great esteem.§

The first notice of the *Tchou ma* in a British publication appeared in the form of the following note from the pen of Sir William Hooker in the 'Kew Garden Miscellany' in 1848:¶ 'Chinese grass-cloth, a very beautiful fabric manufactured in China, first imported under the form of handkerchiefs, and more recently to a considerable extent, as superior to any other fabric, for shirts. By the kind help of Dr Wallich and Sir George Staunton, we think it may be safely asserted that the Chinese grass is the fibre of *Boehmeria nivea* (*Urtica nivea* of Linnaeus), a plant belonging to the urticaceous family—the same tenacity of fibre existing in *U. cannabina*, *heterophylla*, and other species of *Boehmeria*.'

Dr Macgowan of Ningpo has instituted inquiries in various quarters respecting the grass-cloth, and has been successful in bringing interesting facts to light. At a meeting of the Agricultural and Horticultural Society of India, held on 10th May 1849, a communication was read from him to the effect that 'the *Tchou ma* of China, the plant from which grass-cloth is principally manufactured, is the same with the *Kunchoora* of Bengal.' The specimens exhibited in illustration of the communication had been submitted to Dr Falconer, who reported upon them as follows:—'The leaf specimens now sent from Ningpo, although wanting in the flower and fruit, confirm the opinion advanced by me

\* In spring the common people in some parts of Scotland prepare a soup from the young tops of the common nettle, which are tender at that season; this dish is thus referred to by Andrew Fairservice in *Rob Roy*: 'Nae doubt I sould understand my ain trade of horticulture, seeing I was bred in the parish of Dreepdally, near Glascoo, where they raise lang kale under glass, and force the early nettles for their spring-knill.' From the fibres of the matured plant a kind of hemp is produced, as is also obtained from the *Urtica cannabina* of North America. Not only is the stem of the plant thus useful in manufacture, but the roots also, when boiled in alum, yield a yellow dye, which is used for dyeing yarns.

† History of Japan (Schuecher's translation), i. 116.

‡ Flora Japonica, p. 71.

§ Almagestum Botanicum, 1796.

¶ Hooker's Journal of Botany and Kew Garden Miscellany, No. 1.



in my former communication,\* that the *Tchou ma* plant, as described by Dr Macgowan, is not a species of *Cannabis*, but is the same plant as the *Boehmeria nivea* of botanists, described under the name of *Urtica tenacissima* by Roxburgh. The specimens of China correspond exactly with those grown in the Botanic Garden, with which I have compared them. Koempfer in the "Amoenitates Exoticae" gives *Mao* as one of the Japan names of the plant; and Thunberg in regard to its uses says: "Cortex profunibus conficiendis et filis validis ad texturas expetitur."

At a meeting of the Irish Flax Improvement Society, held in May last (1851), the secretary brought forward a communication from Dr Macgowan, with a packet of seed of the plant from which the grass-cloth is manufactured in that country, accompanied by a letter from Dr Bowring, Her Britannic Majesty's consul at Canton, forwarded through the Board of Trade. The committee directed that portions should be sent to the Belfast Botanic Gardens, and to several individual members of the Flax Society, in order to ascertain if the plants could be acclimatised, as this fibre might possibly afford the material for a new textile manufacture. It is indeed gratifying to know that the introduction of this important plant to Britain has been taken in hand by the Irish Flax Improvement Society. Should the attempt be successful, the *Boehmeria* will form a valuable—nay, an invaluable—addition to our agricultural productions.

In discussing the subject of Dr Macgowan's communication, it was observed that hitherto the attempts made to spin the China-grass fibre on flax machinery had not been successful, but that probably means could be devised for producing yarns of good quality, and at a price to compete with the Chinese yarn; and it was suggested that if the plant could be cultivated in the British islands, and the yarn exported to China, the result might be of considerable importance in a national point of view.

It may be gleaned from our preceding remarks, that considerable difference of opinion exists among botanists as to the true species which supplies the *Tchou ma*; Dr Macgowan adhering to the opinion of its being a species of *cannabis* or hemp, while most others incline to think it a nettle. We think there is little doubt that the nettle (*Boehmeria*) is the plant generally cultivated in China for this fibre, although it appears at the same time evident that other plants are used in certain districts to some extent. We are informed by an eminent merchant in Hong-Kong, that having some years ago set inquiries on foot among the Chinese with a view to commercial speculation, he arrived at the following results:—In the south of China (Canton) *Cannabis sativa* (hemp) is used; in the central parts, such as Sochow, *Boehmeria nivea*; and in the north (Tientsinfoo) a malvaceous plant called *Sida tilefolia*.

In India the *Boehmeria* was in Roxburgh's time cultivated for its bark, which abounds in fibres of great strength and fineness. In the Calcutta Botanic Gardens it grows very luxuriantly, and blossoms about the close of the rainy season. The roots of the original plants, as well as of their progeny, are becoming daily extended, and continue healthy and vigorous, throwing up numerous shoots as often as they are cut down for the fibres of their bark, which may be done four or five times every year if the soil is good, and care taken of the plant by watering in the hot weather, and draining the superfluous moisture in the rains. The plant is as readily cultivated from cuttings as the willow.†

Valuable translations from Chinese works relative to the cultivation of the *Tchou ma*, and the preparation of its fibre, are given in the 'Transactions of the Horti-

cultural Society of London' (vol. iv., 236-42.) The instructions for cultivation, and the explanations of the various processes of preparation, are detailed with great precision and minuteness, and are amply sufficient to enable other cultivators of our own country to pursue this new branch of industry, provided the plant be found to be cultivable in our climate. The following observations are from the 'Imperial Treatise of Chinese Agriculture' (lib. lxxviii., fol. 3):—

'For the purpose of sowing the *Tchou ma* in the third or fourth month, a light sandy soil is preferred. The seeds are sown in a garden, or, where there is no garden, in a piece of ground near a river or well. The ground is dug once or twice, then beds one foot broad and four feet long are made, and after that the earth is again dug. The ground is then pressed down, either with the foot or the back of a spade; when it is a little firm its surface is raked smooth. The next night the beds are watered, and on the following morning the earth is loosened with a small toothed rake, and then again levelled. After that half a *ching* (four pints and a half) of moist earth and a *ho* (one pint) of seeds are taken and well mixed together. One *ho* of seeds is enough for one or seven beds. After having sown the seeds, it is not necessary that they should be covered with earth; indeed if that were done they would not germinate. The next thing to be done is to procure four sticks, sharp at one end, and to place them in the ground in a slanting position—two on one side of the bed and two on the opposite—for the purpose of supporting a sort of little roof, two or three feet high, and covered with a thin mat. In the fifth and sixth month, when the rays of the sun are powerful, this light mat is covered with a thick layer of straw, a precaution adopted to prevent the destruction of the young plants by the heat and drought. Before the seed begins to germinate, or when the young leaves first appear, the beds must not be watered. By means of a broom dipped in water the roof of matting is wetted so as to keep the ground underneath moist. At night the roof is removed, that the young plants may catch the dew. As soon as the first leaves have appeared, if parasitical plants appear, they must be immediately pulled up. When the plant is an inch or two high, the roof may be laid aside. If the earth is rather dry, it must be slightly moistened to the depth of about three inches. A stiffer soil is now chosen and thrown into beds, to which the young plants are to be transferred. The following night the first beds, in which the young plants are, are to be watered; the next morning the new beds are to be watered also. The young plants are then dug up with a spade, care being taken to keep a small fall of earth round their roots, and are pricked out at a distance of four inches the one from the other. The ground is often hoed. At the end of three or five days the earth must be watered, and again at the end of ten days, fifteen days, and twenty days. After the tenth month the plants must be covered with a foot of fresh horse, ass, or cow dung.'

It is stated in the 'General Treatise on Agriculture,' entitled 'Nongtching-tsiouen-chou,' that it is a very common practice in some parts to propagate the plant by dividing the entangled roots—a mode more certain and not requiring so much care as the raising of seedlings. It is likewise increased by layers: 'this plan is a very quick one.' In parts where roots are difficult to procure seeds are had recourse to. 'As soon as the young plants are a few inches high they are watered with a mixture of equal quantities of water and liquid manure. Immediately after the stems are cut the ground must be watered, and this ought to be done at night or on a cloudy day; for if the plants were watered in the sunshine they would rust. Great care must be taken not to make use of pigs' dung. The *Tchou ma* may be planted every month, but it is necessary that the ground be moist.' New stocks

\* Journal of the Agricultural and Horticultural Society of India, vol. vi. part iv., p. 219.

† Roxburgh in *Flora Indica* (his posthumous work.)

detached from old plants are planted at a distance of a foot and a half from each other; the beds are prepared in the autumn, 'well worked and manured with fine muck;' and the planting takes place in the following spring.

In this paper we have detailed all that is at present known concerning a crop which may be destined at some future period to become an important European one. It is perhaps worthy of remark, by way of caution to microscopists who may use the grass-cloth, that at the meeting of the British Association last year, Dr Douglas MacLagan having used a handkerchief (exhibited by Dr Cleghorn) for wiping a lens, he found that with even gentle rubbing the fibre scratched the surface of the glass. The grass-cloth handkerchiefs are thus manifestly unsuitable for use by those engaged in microscopic researches.

### HORACE WALPOLE AND THOMAS GRAY.

AN IMAGINARY DIALOGUE.

[Paris, A.D. 1739.]

Gray. And what sort of evening had you, pray, at Milor Conway's?

Walpole. Mighty dull it would have been called in London; but considering the fate of us poor exiles in a strange land, it passed off well enough. We shook each other by the hand more warmly than we should have done in Whitehall or Leicester Square, and felt comfortable at the flesh-and-blood evidence of every John Bull face that there is such a country as England after all.

G. Which one is really in danger of forgetting—one hears so little about it from the quality in Paris.

W. Paris mentions England now and then in a proverb—as she alludes to Paradise (of which she knows just as little) or Babylon the Great—

G. Which she is more familiar with, unless Scripture misleads and my eyesight deceives me.

W. You should have been with us last night at his lordship's, for we railed against French things and personages pretty scandalously I promise you, much as we enjoy ourselves in the naughty heart of them. My Lord George Bentinck and I had a prodigious dispute about the merits of Versailles, which he lauded and I unsparingly abused.

G. For my part, I spent an absolutely uninterrupted evening in letter-writing—

W. To Dick West, I hope, child?

G. Yes; and about Versailles too.

W. I am infinitely obliged to you for forestalling me. I should only have made mouths at its palatial magnificence, whereas you were too well pleased with it to do that.

G. You are mistaken: I thought but poorly of the place, and told Dick what I thought. For instance, I am barbarian enough to call the Grand Front a huge heap of littleness, and to declare of the whole building that a more disagreeable *tout-ensemble* you can nowhere see for love or money; though I admire the back front, with the terrace and marble basins and bronze statues. As for the general taste of the place, everything, I tell him, is forced and constrained; and even you might be shocked to see how I ridicule the gardens, with their sugar-loaves and minced-pies of yew, their scrawl-work of box, their stiff, tiresome walks, and their little squirting *jets-d'eau*.

W. Mind you keep your treasonable epistle under lock and key, or we may both have an *exempt* laying

his paw on our shoulders, and whispering *De part le roi* in our ears, and slipping a *lettre de cachet* into our hands. Little as I love Versailles, it is the genteelst place in the world compared with the Bastille.

G. If the *mouchards* are not on the look-out for me, I am for them, and horribly suspicious it makes me.

W. I'm sure one sat by me at the theatre last Wednesday: a mighty, mean, dirty-looking creature, who would press his snuff-box on me, and talk about *les Anglais*. He pretended not to suppose me a foreigner; but though I said nothing about that, I was rude and abrupt enough to prove myself English to the backbone.

G. I noticed the ugly rascal. He invited me in an off-hand style to join him in a game at *faro* or hazard. Probably he keeps a gaming-house himself.

W. Oh, there's nothing dishonourable in doing that, you know, here in Paris. More than a hundred of the highest people in the place do it; and the houses are open all night-long for any adventurer who likes to go in.

G. I fancy our absence from the gaming-tables is one reason why we get on so slowly with the natives. They have no sympathy with abstinence of that kind. We must be perfect Huguenots to them.

W. Had you much communication with *mon cher ami* of the snuff-box? I hope, if he is a *mouchard*, you are not compromised?

G. I was as reserved and circumspect as a Cambridge freshman. No, I'm quite safe. If I had committed myself I should have been committed before now.

W. You're a wise child; yet *nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit*, especially while sitting out a tedious French ballet, and tempted to talk by a piquant old Parisian. What horrible ideas they have of music here!

G. Nothing can equal its wretchedness except the profound respect with which they listen to it. Did you ever hear such screaming?

W. No; except in our own laughter, when the thing was over: I really believe we squalled louder and longer than the singers, and infinitely more in tune. I'd as soon live on *maigre* as frequent their operas. The music is as like gooseberry-tart as it is like harmony.

G. More so if the gooseberries be sour, and set your teeth on edge. I shan't venture on another bite, but confine myself to Corneille and Molière. What a shame it is the houses are so thin on Molière nights!

W. That's because they've had nothing but Molière for such a prodigious time. I don't suppose Addison himself would continue to be worshipped in London every night of the year, and for twenty years running. But Molière has a foremost page in your good books.

G. I owe him a great deal, if only for whiling away dull hours at Cambridge, where he helped me to forget those execrable mathematics which are the alpha and omega of the university articles of faith. Cambridge will never produce a Molière, nor will England either.

W. Don't be ungrateful, child, for national mercies. Cambridge has given us Newton; and if France has her Molière, have we not Dryden and Vanbrugh, and Wycherley and Steele, and a world of others?

G. Perhaps we shall have Walpole on the list of English classics before we have done.

W. Who can tell? Stranger things have happened. Not only Balaam, but Balaam's ass we find among the prophets. Then why not Sir Robert's son among the poets?

G. Or Thomas Gray himself, riding triumphantly on your argument of an ass. I daresay we have both had our day-dreams of glory at Eton and Cambridge.

W. And are not too old or too sage to have them still. After becoming travelled gentlemen, and initiated



in all the mysteries of the Grand Tour, we must let the world see what is in us, and appeal to posterity—that imposing fiction which shall one day be fact!

G. If the world knows no more of us a century hence than it does to-day, posterity will owe us as little as we owe it. Ah, if one could only rise from the grave in 1839, and search the booksellers' shops to see whether anything of Walpole or Gray be still on sale! To poor aspiring authors posterity is what eternity is to Addison's *Cato*—a 'pleasing, dreadful thought!' I wonder what our great-grandchildren will think of Pope and Arbuthnot, of Brooke's tragedies and Coventry's dialogues. Unless they're greater fools than I suppose they'll be—one may speak disrespectfully of one's juniors, who are not even going to be born for so considerable a time to come—they will cancel many a literary verdict of our day; raising the beggar from the dunghill, where we leave him, to be a companion of princes, and lowering some of our great Apollos to silent contempt.

W. Why, plenty of authors have come to this pass in our own experience, whom Pope's 'Dunciad' has at once stripped of immortality and immortalised. Every generation produces plenty more—people who make a noise and pother for a few brief moons, and then either die a violent death, like Mr Pope's victims, by a sort of justifiable homicide, or else perish from natural causes, the most natural in the world.

G. There's rather a dearth at present in our home-literature. Poetry seems to have sunk with the Jacobites—

W. Heaven forbid they should rise again together!

G. Spoken like thy father's son. The best thing I have seen lately is a satire called 'London,' said to be by a young fellow named Johnson, who writes for the magazines. It was published last year, and ought to be better known than it is, being very terse and energetic; every line in it is well-loaded, and goes off with a sharp report that you must listen to.

W. The satire's a sort of translation from Juvenal—isn't it? I've had it in my hands without reading it.

G. Mr Johnson is no mere translator I promise you. His poem is rather a transfusion of Juvenalian *vis rite* into modern veins; such a satire as the old Roman himself would have written had he been a subject of his most sacred majesty the second George.

W. Why, child, you've discovered another star in the heavens.

G. A fixed one, depend on't; and one that you may see with the naked eye without telescope or glasses.

W. Your vision is perhaps too keen. Some eyes, you know, see in the dark; but we're not all gifted after that feline fashion; and meanwhile Mr —a—a—a—Johnson—is it?—must try and wait. If he be no falling star he need not be in a hurry, but can go on shining till we have time to look at him.

G. His light won't go out yet, never fear. As for seeing stars in the dark, I don't suppose that faculty is peculiar to me. When else should we notice them? This one will probably be gazetted in the astronomical tables of Parnassus a hundred years hence.

W. In that case the year 1839 ought to have a record of Mr Gray's prediction as well as Mr Johnson's sign in the zodiac. How would 'London' go down here at Paris? Is it smart enough to take with the readers of Messieurs Boileau and Voltaire? Mr Pope is already a prodigious favourite here, and the French are capital judges of satire.

G. Mr Johnson is too smart for them—that is, against them: he rails quite angrily against the 'supple Gaul,' declaring that—

'Obsequious, artful, voluble, and gay,  
On Britain's fond credulity they prey.  
No gainful trade their industry can 'scape—  
They sing, they dance, clean shoes, or '—

W. Child, child! *c'est effroyable!* Remember the Bastille. Surely you believe in *exempts*? And if stone-walls have ears, mercy on us! what must they have?

### THE SHEEP-FARMER IN AUSTRALIA.\*

THE first step to be taken by our colonists, now that they had reached the future station, was of course to secure a legal right to the occupancy of the run; and Mr Jones at once started for Melbourne for the purpose of procuring a licence for an extended grant, as it was evident that, from the nature of the land, the run must be a large one to prove profitable. It may here be stated that this point was in due time settled, and the extent of the run defined: at a later period it was regularly surveyed by the government surveyor, and a furrow-boundary drawn. Its extent will appear somewhat fabulous to those of the old country, accustomed to measure land by acres; but it must be remembered that only about two-thirds was available pasturage. It had a river-frontage of about 27 miles, and on the north side of the river ran 8 miles back; it also included about 9 miles on the south side, running back there 8 miles likewise: making altogether a territory of about 288 square miles.

A situation was now to be chosen for the head-station, and a central point was selected on the bank of the river where it made a convenient bend in front of the intended buildings. The party had met with a carpenter at one of the nearest stations, whose services were put in requisition; and as architectural plans in a new country are not very intricate or varied, the design was soon drawn, and some extra hands hired to carry it into effect. It may be asked, where in the wilderness are extra servants to be had just as they are wanted? The problem is thus solved: at busy seasons, such as lambing or shearing time, mounted labourers are generally on the move from station to station seeking employment; and as they engage for a term, and seldom re-engage with the same master when that term is expired, there are generally labourers to be had, willing to enter into an engagement with a new employer. The fact of a new station being occupied soon gets known, and as extra hands are usually wanted at first, such stations are the points of attraction for those in the neighbourhood out of employment.

They first erected, some distance in the rear of the situation of the intended house, a small hut, which was taken possession of by the master; the kitchen was then built—a single detached room some 20 feet by 10, built of slabs in the mode before described; and this became in turn the residence, and the hut was given up to the men. The larger hut was then commenced, in front of the kitchen, and was habitable in about eight months. It consisted of two principal apartments 12 feet by 16, with a passage between them of 5 feet in width—one used as the living room, the other as the bed-chamber; two smaller rooms were built as a lean-to behind; and at the side, to correspond to the kitchen, the store was erected. Stabling, fowl-houses, &c. completed the arrangement: stockyards were enclosed with fencing, and two or three paddocks were in course of time railled in. The shearing-house and wool-shed—an important part of the establishment of the sheep-farmer—was placed on the opposite side of the river, some little distance in the rear of the other buildings. This was a substantial slab-building of about 110 feet by 40, and it was placed on the opposite side of the river relative to the dwelling, as the number of sheep driven there at shearing time always makes the ground bare for some distance around, giving it a barren and desolate appearance. Two spots some eight or ten miles up and down the river, on either side of the head-station, were fixed

\* Continued from No. 383.

upon for out-stations for sheep, and at each was a hut erected and a flock placed, under the care, at first, of two shepherds and a hut-keeper; all of whom were armed with musket and ball-cartridge, as in a strange country they could not say what enemies they might encounter, whether in the shape of blacks\* or bush-rangers. It may here be remarked, that with the latter our settlers were never troubled: they heard some tale of such having appeared, and murdered and plundered at some outlying station in the neighbourhood, just before they occupied their land; but they were themselves never subject to any annoyance on this score. With regard to the blacks, a gang soon made its appearance, with their chief, an intelligent and powerful young fellow, at its head. They were, however, disposed to be very friendly, and soon made themselves useful in stripping bark for roofing, sawing timber, &c. For these services they were paid in kind—a bullock, some tobacco, or other delicacy, being their remuneration. They are accomplished thieves, and when in the neighbourhood a sharp look-out is necessary; indeed, unless their labour was wanted, 'the master' would endeavour to warn them away, with the aid of strong language and a stock-whip, directly a gang was discovered about to make a descent upon the station. They are usually very cautious in driving a bargain, taught, perhaps, by experience that they may be overmatched by their white employer. They will turn with contempt from the offer, it may be, of some lean, working bullock, with 'Him bale budgery†—him too much old man—you too much . . . cheat!'—the expletives of their white teachers being, it is to be regretted, too aptly caught up as part of their vocabulary, or 'jabber', to use their own word for talk.

But to return to our subject—the head-station. The hut of the squatter, when complete, is rather picturesque than otherwise, and Frank's was a fair specimen of the class. It had a frontage of about 35 feet, was 7½ feet high from the ground to the eaves, with a veranda, supported upon green-painted posts, the whole length; the doors and window-frames were of cedar, and were brought ready-made from Melbourne, and being oiled, had a very civilised appearance; a small enclosure, with paling and wicket for entrance, was in front of the hut, and contained a few trees, and, for a few months in the year, some home flowers—mignonette, &c. The interior of the rooms was lined with canvas (battered as in England); and in some huts, where a lady-inhabitant introduces elegances as well as comforts, the canvas is covered with paper of some gay pattern; then the whole apartment—with its chairs and tables—piano, may be—and little library of choice books—assumes quite a home appearance, and would do no discredit to any English dwelling of the middle class. In the case, however, of our friends—both bachelors—the hut was but simply furnished, for a long period nothing beyond necessities being admitted; the only ornamented part being the chimney, which was whitewashed (with lime brought from Melbourne) in a tasty style. The bedrooms contained tent-bedsteads, with their linen and mattresses, and scarcely anything else; the vicinity of the river rendered washstands superfluous, and the mysteries of the toilet being renounced by the squatter when in the bush. He keeps a town-suit of 'dress' clothes in his box at his hotel at his market-town, which suit he wears during his annual visit there; but at other times he is unfettered by fashion. Loose canvas-trousers, and check-shirt open at the throat, with broad-brimmed cabbage-tree hat, or of late the 'Jim Crow,' are the principal articles of attire. Complete it by a pair of jack-boots and stock-whip, and imagine a

beard of many months' growth, and you may picture the squatter to the life; though it must be confessed that the razor is more used than formerly, as civilisation, so to speak, advances into the interior.

Our friends having brought up their horses, some twenty in number, and imported an Arab from India to run with them, and having also succeeded in getting upon advantageous terms a small drove of cattle (for consumption), found their hands tolerably full of work; and for the sake of convenience adopted a plan of division of labour, which, being found to answer well, they continued to follow. Frank took upon himself the superintendence of the out-station work, while his partner engaged to manage the books and stores, and look after the men employed at the head-station—a sort of secretary for the home department. The most difficult part of Frank's daily duty was, at first, the necessary breaking in of the flocks and cattle to the run: this is merely the keeping a constant watch upon them, and not allowing them to stray over the boundary, and thus trespass upon a neighbour's property; but if properly attended to, although a great deal of care is required at first, it is astonishing how soon the stock appear instinctively to know their proper limit. This object once attained, Frank's chief occupation consisted in a daily ride to one or more of the out-stations, for the purpose of overlooking his stock, and seeing that his men did their duty. Nowhere is 'the eye of the master' more necessary to insure diligence in the servant than in the bush, and in no situation is 'greenness,' or want of practical knowledge in the employer, sooner found out and taken advantage of. It was now that the experience so hardly earned by Frank stood him in good stead; and during his daily superintendence he had often cause to be thankful that he had so serviceable an apprenticeship at Jerry's Creek before undertaking his present extensive speculation. Activity, too, both of body and mind, are essential points for success; and often has our settler ridden to a distant sheep-station, some twelve miles off, counted out the flock, and galloped home again by breakfast-time—sunrise. Indeed, distance seems never to be thought of by men whose life, like that of the wandering Arab, is mostly spent in the saddle, and whose horses, comparatively speaking, never tire, or need more food than the natural grasses of the country. A little anecdote may serve to illustrate this. Soon after Frank's arrival at the Henry River Station, on paying a visit one evening to his next neighbour, whose station was about twenty miles distant, our squatter found the wife of his friend suffering from toothache.

'Why don't you have it out?' was Frank's natural exclamation.

'You shew that you are fresh in these parts,' answered his neighbour. 'Have it out, indeed! why, our doctor lives fifty miles off!'

'Well,' rejoined Frank, whose employment in his brother's surgery might now turn to advantage—'well, I'll take it out for you. I must run back for my instruments, and will do the job in a twinkling.' And, in truth, into the saddle he jumped—homewards his twenty miles he hied—pocketed his instruments—galloped back—pulled out the offender—had a cup of tea and returned home—as if it had been but three streets off.

About the end of June the lambing season—an anxious time—commenced, and continued for about six weeks. Two extra hands were hired to each flock, and as the lambs are all bred in the open air, a good deal of attention was required; the season proved dry, which was in their favour, and a good increase was the result; and although the marking, tailing, &c. of the flock of weaners, which was all done by Frank himself, was laborious and far from pleasant employment, yet 'the hope of reward sweetened labour,' and it was some little diversion from the usual monotony of his duties.

\* The aborigines are called 'blacks'; children of settlers, born in the colony, 'natives.'

† Anglo- No good.'

The next period of excitement came with October, when shearing, the important operation of the year, began. Our friends were under no anxiety respecting the extra hands necessary, for several gangs of shearers are sure to be travelling the country at this season; and, accordingly, a troop of ten or twelve made their appearance one morning with the inquiry: 'Has the master hired his shearers yet?'

'No,' says the master; 'how much a hundred will you take?'

'How much will you give?'

Frank, who had heard of a neighbour hiring at the rate of 12s. 6d., named that sum.

'That won't do at all; we'll come for one pound.'

'I can't give that.'

'Well, good-night, master.'

'Good-night!' And the worthies dispersed forthwith to the men's huts, where, after hobbling their horses, they made themselves comfortable for the night, and made use of the time to inquire as to the master's character for liberality, &c. The next morning, while Frank was at breakfast, came a deputation: 'If you'll take us all, we'll come for sixteen shillings.'

'No,' says our friend. But they would not abate more; and when the last of them had filed off past the river, Frank was fain to 'cooie'\* after them, and agree to their offer. This sort of battle between master and servant is very common with such men, as they lose no opportunity for taking in a fresh hand in the matter of wages, as indeed in every other particular. If the master or his deputy does not superintend the operation of shearing, or if the men find him to be ignorant, they will 'race,' or leave on the bottom, the most valuable wool, which is the hardest to cut. A fast shearer has been known to cut 120 sheep a day; but 60 to 80 is the usual average. The men purchase their own rations and shears, which are supplied from the master's store; as each fleece is shorn it is subjected to the press—after having been shaken free from dirt, and folded upon the folding-table—and packed in bags brought from Melbourne, always a necessary part of the stores. The press used by Frank for some time was merely a weight adjusted by pulleys and common tackle; but as this was frequently getting out of order, he subsequently purchased a screw-press—a very effective though costly article, its price being L.60.

In about a month the wool was ready for carriage to Melbourne, and the drays were put in requisition, the bales were all well secured upon them, and put in charge of two men to each dray—the driver and his mate—who took provisions with them for the time they expected to be on the road—about a month. They were expected to travel about fourteen miles per diem, starting early in the morning, halting during the hottest part of the day, and sleeping at night under the tarpaulins of their drays. In about a fortnight Frank, having arranged with his partner for the conduct and supervision of affairs at home, started for the capital to sell their wool, and lay in a stock of supplies for the next year. His manner of journeying was this: Attired in the usual costume, he galloped along on one horse, at the same time leading another, upon which a small valise with a change was strapped. Starting each day at or before sunrise, resting for a few hours at mid-day, and putting up for the night at sundown at some friendly station—or, as he neared the town, at some roadside inn—he managed to get over from forty to fifty miles a day, occasionally mounting the led-horse by way of relief.

He came up with the drays on the fourth day, and finding all right, pursued his course, and reached Melbourne at the end of the sixth. Arrived at his hotel, he donned his town-suit, and proceeded next morning to his agent, to negotiate the sale of his wool, and see

how his balance stood. The usual way of doing business is this: The up-country squatter has his agent in town, to whom he consigns his wool, and upon whom he draws cheques to pay wages and other expenses. The account is balanced when the clip arrives, and often does the farmer find that he is in debt to his agent. The expenses at first are necessarily great, but credit is readily obtained—the borrower paying a variable, sometimes a high rate of interest, and a commission upon the loan. This system of credit, although convenient, is apt to generate carelessness in money-matters; and the custom of living luxuriously when in town—or 'down the country,' as it is called—sometimes swallows up much of the year's profits; and although it is but justice to state, that in general the settlers are steady and economical men—especially of late years—still there are always some few 'fast' ones to be found too ready to enter into the dissipations of the capital. Doubtless there are many excuses to be found for men debarred in a great measure for the greater part of the year from the society and amusements of their fellows: it is easy to fancy how reluctant they must be to tear themselves from the charms and social enjoyments of the town; still it would be well if some were to remember the sentiment—'May to-day's enjoyment bear to-morrow's reflection!' and copy the example of our friend in enjoying themselves during their sojourn without exceeding the bounds of prudence. With regard to the labouring-classes, too often may be applied to them the colonial phrase—'They earn their money like horses, and spend it like asses.' The shepherd or stock-keeper, immediately upon receiving his balance of wages due at the end of his term of service, goes to the nearest inn to change his cheque, and there, in many instances, he remains day after day, or week after week, according to the length of his purse, and for the greater part of the time in a state of intoxication, until he has spent every shilling.

It may appear somewhat extraordinary to those of the old country, accustomed to buy their pound of coffee, and who consider a loaf or two of sugar, and seven pounds of tea, a large investment, to read of the items of a squatter's provisioning sent home on the return of the drays. They took back no less a quantity than eight tons of flour, thirty-five cwt. of sugar, nine chests of tea, of about seventy pounds each, and one keg of tobacco (280 lbs.)—these the necessities. Then came minor articles—preserved fruits, pickles, crockery, linen, ironmongery, clothing, fish-hooks, powder and shot, harness, shears, &c. &c.; and among the rest strychnine (a deadly poison, the active principle of the nux-vomica), of which they use great quantities to poison the native dogs, this mode of extermination being found most effectual. In short, the store of the squatter presents more the appearance of what is termed in the country districts of England a *general shop*, which in effect it really is; for everything that the men require, either for themselves or families, beyond their regular rations, is purchased at the store, and put down to their account, and deducted from their wages at settling-time.

It needs not to detail minutely the occurrences of succeeding years: each as it passed witnessed improvements on our settlers' run, and increase in their flocks; but their duties and occupations were the same. In the third year they built a wooden bridge over the river at their head-station, in lieu of a punt which had heretofore served them for crossing. The next year they purchased the screw-press before mentioned, and imported a race-horse from England for the purpose of breeding. In the year just passed they sold their annual clip for a considerable sum; they likewise disposed of from 5000 to 7000 supernumerary sheep at 6s. per head. They have at present a stock of about 20,000 sheep; 200 head of cattle, which they keep up to that number for the purpose of food, one being shot every ten days for the consumption of the station, as beef is the princi-

\* The colonial 'halloo' heard to a great distance.



pal meat eaten; they have about seventy horses, worth on the average £10 each; their store is well filled, and their improvements are in good repair. The country around them is much more settled: when first they occupied the run, they were obliged to send some 150 miles for their letters—the mail-cart now passes their hut, and delivers their bag twice a week; they are both in the commission of the peace, and are fast becoming substantial men. They talk of getting a small run near town, where they may take in their stock for sale until prices suit; and where—the climate being more temperate—they may reside during the hottest part of the year, appointing a manager at the Henry Rivet. They have been fortunately free, hitherto, from catarrh in their flocks—a terrible disease, which sometimes sweeps away hundreds at once, and depreciates the value of the survivors, but which seldom appears in a 'new' country. In fact, it seems, in all human probability, that their onward path is now smooth; the first difficulties are over; and if they have the average good fortune, they will soon arrive at that point of life's journey from which they may look back in security upon their early trials, as only necessary to be kept in memory as reasons for thankfulness that they are past.

It would be well perhaps for our settler—as it would certainly be a conclusion more in accordance with custom in all such romantic narratives—if this could be wound up with a happy wedding; but, alas! our friend is still a bachelor. It would be well perhaps for him—it would certainly be well for the country of his adoption—were the case otherwise. Woman, after all, is the great civiliser. What influence so effectual as hers in polishing the rugged manners of a new settlement, in alleviating the crosses, and rendering bearable the toils, of the squatter's daily life? What power so likely as hers to reform those habits hinted at in our tale, by making home the source of enjoyment, and rendering unnecessary the search for happiness elsewhere? Admitting that some women are unfitted by nature or habits for life in the bush, is there anything in that life alarming to the majority? Certainly not. Nowhere does the peculiar province of the sex—domesticity, to use a hard word—shew to more advantage than in the *ménage* of the squatter. Is there more neatness and order around a station—the garden better cultivated—the men less rough and unpolished—the master more happy and contented, even if not more prosperous, than his neighbours—be sure a lady-president is there; and the more frequently such homes are met with in the colony—the more extended the sphere of such influences—the happier will be the state, the more elevated the social position, of the sheep-farmer in Australia.

A few particulars may be perhaps advantageously added on practical matters relative to bush-life. First, as to the tenure upon which runs are held. At the time the station above described was occupied, a licence to hold lands while unsold was granted by government at an assessment according to the extent. (The Henry River Run was assessed at £50.) But now some changes are about to take, or have taken place, and by the new regulations lands are to be let by tender annually, when in settled districts—that is, near and around towns; in an unsettled country, as Frank's, to have fourteen years' lease at an assessment according to the number of stock a run will carry; and all intermediate lands to have a lease of seven years. When such lands change hands, the new-comer to take off all 'improvements' at a valuation. The wages of labourers differ somewhat according to rank, and vary according to the supply. Shepherds get £35 to £50 per annum, with a hut and rations—namely, twelve pounds of meat, ten pounds of flour, two pounds of sugar, a quarter of a pound of tea, and in some places a quarter of a pound of tobacco; in others they have to buy this last 'necessary,' together with soap, candles, rice, clothing, &c.

from their employer's store. The climate in the interior is very hot for seven or eight months of the year. There is very little vegetation at this season, but during the winter and spring months—June to October—which are very like early autumn in England, vegetation proceeds rapidly. There is a good supply of excellent fish in the rivers; and fowl—such as quail, wild turkey, snipe, &c.—are found in most districts. The hospitality of the bush is proverbial. Men dismount at a station, secure their horses, and walk in and make themselves comfortable with precisely the same confidence as if all were their own property; and as 'sundown' is the general dinner-hour in the bush, 'callers' are continually dropping in at that time: they partake of the meal—join in a social pipe, and pot of tea or glass of grog, as the case may be—retire to a tent-bedstead and mattress in the sleeping-room; and are often up and away before the master rises, without wishing him good-morning.

The great want in the bush is the means of education, both religious and moral. Children must be separated early from their parents, or they will grow up mere shepherds and stock-keepers; but, of course, as the country becomes settled, this evil will be gradually diminished. Even now most families have religious services in their houses on Sunday, at which their households and dependents assist. But when the nearest church is 300 miles distant, religious observances must be often neglected, and the Sunday becomes a day of comparative rest certainly, but nothing more.

One important subject may be briefly noticed. Who are best fitted for emigrants? Either the labourer, the man able and willing to work with his hands, or the man with some capital, who is thus enabled to use the hands of others. And even the capitalist, to do well, must have no small share of industry, energy, and perseverance. Any one going out without these characteristics (unless he turn shepherd, which employment will admirably suit even the laziest) may be put down, to use an expressive colonial phrase, as 'cranky,' or not in the possession of common discretion: on the other hand, with these qualities, conjoined with prudence and economy, he may not succeed in amassing a fortune, but he will assuredly secure comfort and competence.

To those of his acquaintance who may discern the real hero of the foregoing narrative through the 'nominis umbra' Frank Woodman, the writer begs to say that the true 'Frank' is not responsible for any facts or opinions therein expressed; the recollections of many a pleasant evening passed in his company afforded the foundation of the sketch which will for the first time meet his eye in these pages.

#### VAGARIES OF THE IMAGINATION.

'FANCY it burgundy,' said Boniface of his ale—'only fancy it, and it is worth a guinea a quart!' Boniface was a philosopher: fancy can do much more than that. Those who fancy themselves labouring under an affection of the heart are not slow in verifying the apprehension: the uneasy and constant watching of its pulsations soon disturbs the circulation, and malady may ensue beyond the power of medicine. Some physicians believe that inflammation can be induced in any part of the body by a fearful attention being continually directed towards it; indeed it has been a question with some whether the stigmata (the marks of the wounds of our Saviour) may not have been produced on the devotee by the influences of an excited imagination. The hypochondriac has been known to expire when forced to pass through a door which he fancied too narrow to admit his person. The story of the criminal who, unconscious of the arrival of the reprieve,

died under the stroke of a wet handkerchief, believing it to be the axe, is well known. Paracelsus held, 'that there is in man an imagination which really effects and brings to pass the things that did not before exist; for a man by imagination willing to move his body moves it in fact, and by his imagination and the commerce of invisible powers he may also move another body.' Paracelsus would not have been surprised at the feats of electro-biology. He exhorts his patients to have 'a good faith, a strong imagination, and they shall find the effects.' 'All doubt,' he says, 'destroys work, and leaves it imperfect in the wise designs of nature: it is from faith that imagination draws its strength, it is by faith it becomes complete and realised; he who believeth in nature will obtain from nature to the extent of his faith, and let the object of this faith be real or imaginary, he nevertheless reaps similar results—and hence the cause of superstition.'

So early as 1462 Pomponatus of Mantua came to the conclusion, in his work on incantation, that all the arts of sorcery and witchcraft were the result of natural operations. He conceived that it was not improbable that external means, called into action by the soul, might relieve our sufferings, and that there did, moreover, exist individuals endowed with salutary properties; so it might, therefore, be easily conceived that marvellous effects should be produced by the imagination and by confidence, more especially when these are reciprocal between the patient and the person who assists his recovery. Two years after, the same opinion was advanced by Agrippa in Cologne. 'The soul,' he said, 'if inflamed by a fervent imagination, could dispense health and disease, not only in the individual himself, but in other bodies.' However absurd these opinions may have been considered, or looked on as enthusiastic, the time has come when they will be gravely examined.

That medical professors have at all times believed the imagination to possess a strange and powerful influence over mind and body is proved by their writings, by some of their prescriptions, and by their oft-repeated direction in the sick-chamber to divert the patient's mind from dwelling on his own state and from attending to the symptoms of his complaint. They consider the reading of medical books which accurately describe the symptoms of various complaints as likely to have an injurious effect, not only on the delicate but on persons in full health; and they are conscious how many died during the time of the plague and cholera, not only of these diseases but from the dread of them, which brought on all the fatal symptoms. So evident was the effect produced by the detailed accounts of the cholera in the public papers in the year 1849, that it was found absolutely necessary to restrain the publications on the subject. The illusions under which vast numbers acted and suffered have gone, indeed, to the most extravagant extent: individuals, not merely singly but in communities, have actually believed in their own transformation. A nobleman of the court of Louis XIV. fancied himself a dog, and would pop his head out of the window to bark at the passengers; while the barking disease at the camp-meetings of the Methodists of North America has been described as 'extravagant beyond belief.' Rollin and Hecquet have recorded a malady by which the inmates of an extensive convent near Paris were attacked simultaneously every day at the same hour, when they believed themselves

transformed into cats, and a universal mewing was kept up throughout the convent for some hours. But of all dreadful forms which this strange hallucination took, none was so terrible as that of the lycanthropy, which at one period spread through Europe; in which the unhappy sufferers, believing themselves wolves, went prowling about the forests uttering the most terrific howlings, carrying off lambs from the flocks, and gnawing dead bodies in their graves.

While every day's experience adds some new proof of the influence possessed by the imagination over the body, the supposed effect of contagion has become a question of doubt. Lately, at a meeting in Edinburgh, Professor Dick gave it as his opinion that there was no such thing as hydrophobia in the lower animals: 'what went properly by that name was simply an inflammation of the brain; and the disease, in the case of human beings, was caused by an overexcited imagination, worked upon by the popular delusion on the effects of a bite by rabid animals.' The following paragraph from the 'Curiosities of Medicine' appears to justify this now common enough opinion:—'Several persons had been bitten by a rabid dog in the Faubourg St Antoine, and three of them had died in our hospital. A report, however, was prevalent that we kept a mixture which would effectually prevent their fatal termination; and no less than six applicants who had been bitten were served with a draught of coloured water, and in no one instance did hydrophobia ensue.'

A remarkable cure through a similar aid of the imagination took place in a patient of Dr Beddoes, who was at the time very sanguine about the effect of nitrous acid gas in paralytic cases. Anxious that it should be imbibed by one of his patients, he sent an invalid to Sir Humphry Davy, with a request that he would administer the gas. Sir Humphry put the bulb of the thermometer under the tongue of the paralytic, to ascertain the temperature of the body, that he might be sure whether it would be affected at all by the inhalation of the gas. The patient, full of faith from what the enthusiastic physician had assured him would be the result, and believing that the thermometer was what was to effect the cure, exclaimed at once that he felt better. Sir Humphry, anxious to see what imagination would do in such a case, did not attempt to deceive the man, but saying that he had done enough for him that day, desired him to be with him the next morning. The thermometer was then applied as it had been the day before, and for every day during a fortnight—at the end of which time the patient was perfectly cured.

Perhaps there is nothing on record more curious of this kind than the cures unwittingly performed by Chief-Justice Holt. It seems that for a youthful frolic he and his companions had put up at a country inn; they, however, found themselves without the means of defraying their expenses, and were at a loss to know what they should do in such an emergency. Holt, however, perceived that the innkeeper's daughter looked very ill, and on inquiring what was the matter, learned that she had the ague; when, passing himself off for a medical student, he said that he had an infallible cure for the complaint. He then collected a number of plants, mixed them up with various ceremonies, and enclosed them in parchment, on which he scrawled divers cabalistic characters. When all was completed, he suspended the amulet round the neck of the young woman, and, strange to say, the ague left her and never returned. The landlord, grateful for the restoration of his daughter, not only declined receiving any payment from the youths, but pressed them to remain as long as they pleased. Many years after, when Holt was on the bench, a woman was brought before him, charged with witchcraft: she

was accused of curing the ague by charms. All she said in defence was, that she did possess a ball which was a sovereign remedy in the complaint. The charm was produced and handed to the judge, who recognised the very ball which he had himself compounded in his boyish days, when out of mere fun he had assumed the character of a medical practitioner.

Many distinguished physicians have candidly confessed that they preferred confidence to art. Faith in the remedy is often not only half the cure, but the whole cure. Madame de Genlis tells of a girl who had lost the use of her leg for five years, and could only move with the help of crutches, while her back had to be supported: she was in such a pitiable state of weakness, the physicians had pronounced her case incurable. She, however, took it into her head that if she was taken to Notre Dame de Liesse she would certainly recover. It was fifteen leagues from Carlepont where she lived. She was placed in a cart which her father drove, while her sister sat by her supporting her back. The moment the steeple of Notre Dame de Liesse was in sight she uttered an exclamation, and said that her leg was getting well. She alighted from the car without assistance, and no longer requiring the help of her crutches, she ran into the church. When she returned home the villagers gathered about her, scarcely believing that it was indeed the girl who had left them in such a wretched state, now they saw her running and bounding along, no longer a cripple, but as active as any among them.

Not less extraordinary are the cures which are effected by some sudden agitation. An alarm of fire has been known to restore a patient entirely, or for a time, from a tedious illness: it is no uncommon thing to hear of the victim of a severe fit of the gout, whose feet have been utterly powerless, running nimbly away from some approaching danger. Poor Grimaldi in his declining years had almost quite lost the use of his limbs owing to the most hopeless debility. As he sat one day by the bedside of his wife, who was ill, word was brought to him that a friend waited below to see him. He got down to the parlour with extreme difficulty. His friend was the bearer of heavy news which he dreaded to communicate: it was the death of Grimaldi's son, who, though reckless and worthless, was fondly loved by the poor father. The intelligence was broken as gently as such a sad event could be: but in an instant Grimaldi sprang from his chair—his lassitude and debility were gone, his breathing, which had for a long time been difficult, became perfectly easy—he was hardly a moment in bounding up the stairs which but a quarter of an hour before he had passed with extreme difficulty in ten minutes; he reached the bedside, and told his wife that their son was dead; and as she burst into an agony of grief he flung himself into a chair, and became again instantaneously, as it has been touchingly described, 'an enfeebled and crippled old man.'

The imagination, which is remarkable for its ungovernable influence, comes into action on some occasions periodically with the most precise regularity. A friend once told us of a young relation who was subject to nervous attacks: she was spending some time at the seaside for change of air, but the evening-gun, fired from the vessel in the bay at eight o'clock, was always the signal for a nervous attack: the instant the report was heard she fell back insensible, as if she had been shot. Those about her endeavoured if possible to withdraw her thoughts from the expected moment: at length one evening they succeeded, and while she was engaged in an interesting conversation the evening-gun was unnoticed. By and by she asked the hour, and appeared uneasy when she found the time had passed. The next evening it was evident that she would not let her attention be withdrawn: the gun fired, and she swooned away; and when

revived, another fainting fit succeeded, as if it were to make up for the omission of the preceding evening! It is told of the great tragic actress Clairon, who had been the innocent cause of the suicide of a man who destroyed himself by a pistol-shot, that ever after, at the exact moment when the fatal deed had been perpetrated—one o'clock in the morning—she heard the shot. If asleep, it awakened her; if engaged in conversation, it interrupted her; in solitude or in company, at home or travelling, in the midst of revelry or at her devotions, she was sure to hear it to the very moment.

The same indelible impression has been made in hundreds of cases, and on persons of every variety of temperament and every pursuit, whether engaged in business, science, or art, or rapt in holy contemplation. On one occasion Pascal had been thrown down on a bridge which had no parapet, and his imagination was so haunted for ever after by the danger, that he always fancied himself on the brink of a steep precipice overhanging an abyss ready to engulf him. This illusion had taken such possession of his mind that the friends who came to converse with him were obliged to place the chairs on which they seated themselves between him and the fancied danger. But the effects of terror are the best known of all the vagaries of the imagination.

A very remarkable case of the influence of imagination occurred between sixty and seventy years since in Dublin, connected with the celebrated frolics of Dalkey Island. It is said Curran and his gay companions delighted to spend a day there, and that with them originated the frolic of electing 'a king of Dalkey and the adjacent islands,' and appointing his chancellor and all the officers of state. A man in the middle rank of life, universally respected, and remarkable alike for kindly and generous feelings and a convivial spirit, was unanimously elected to fill the throne. He entered with his whole heart into all the humours of the pastime, in which the citizens of Dublin so long delighted. A journal was kept, called the 'Dalkey Gazette,' in which all public proceedings were inserted, and it afforded great amusement to its conductors. But the mock pageantry, the affected loyalty, and the pretended homage of his subjects, at length began to excite the imagination of 'King John,' as he was called. Fiction at length became with him reality, and he fancied himself 'every inch a king.' His family and friends perceived with dismay and deep sorrow the strange delusion which nothing could shake: he would speak on no subject save the kingdom of Dalkey and its government, and he loved to dwell on the various projects he had in contemplation for the benefit of his people, and boasted of his high prerogative: he never could conceive himself divested for one moment of his royal powers, and exacted the most profound deference to his kingly authority. The last year and a half of his life were spent in Swift's hospital for lunatics. He felt his last hours approaching, but no gleam of returning reason marked the parting scene: to the very last instant he believed himself a king, and all his cares and anxieties were for his people. He spoke in high terms of his chancellor, his attorney-general, and all his officers of state, and of the dignitaries of the church: he recommended them to his kingdom, and trusted they might all retain the high offices which they now held. He spoke on the subject with a dignified calmness well becoming the solemn leave-taking of a monarch; but when he came to speak of the crown he was about to relinquish for ever his feelings were quite overcome, and the tears rolled down his cheeks: 'I leave it,' said he, 'to my people, and to him whom they may elect as my successor!' This remarkable scene is recorded in some of the notices of deaths for the year 1788. The delusion, though most painful to



his friends, was far from an unhappy one to its victim: his feelings were gratified to the last while thinking he was occupied with the good of his fellow-creatures—an occupation best suited to his benevolent disposition.

#### AN INDIAN PET.

THE ichneumon, called in India the neulah, benjee, or mungoos, is known all over that country. I have seen it on the banks of the Ganges, and among the old walls of Jaunpore, Sirhind, and at Loodianah; for, like others of the weasel kind, this little animal delights in places where it can lurk and peep—such as heaps of stones and ruins; and there is no lack of these in old Indian cities.

That the neulah is a fierce, terrible, bloodthirsty, destructive little creature, I experienced to my cost; but notwithstanding all the provocation I received, I was led into becoming his friend and protector, and so finding him out to be the most charming and amiable pet in the world.

In my military career (for the Old Indian was long attached to the army) I was stationed at Jaunpore, and having a house with many conveniences, I took pleasure in rearing poultry; but scarcely a single chicken could be magnified to a hen: the rapacious neulahs, fond of tender meat, waylaying all my young broods, sucking their blood, and feasting on their brains. But such devastations could not be allowed to pass with impunity; so we watched the enemy, and succeeded in shooting several of the offenders, prowling among the hennah or mehendi hedges, where the clocking-hens used to repose in the shade surrounded by their progeny.

After one of these *battues* my little daughter happened to go to the fowl-house in the evening in search of eggs, and was greatly startled by a melancholy squeaking which seemed to proceed from an old rat-hole in one corner. Upon proper investigation this was suspected to be the nest of one of the neulahs which had suffered the last sentence of the law; but how to get at the young we did not know, unless by digging up the floor, and of this I did not approve. So the little young ones would have perished but for a childish freak of my young daughter. She seated herself before the nest, and imitated the cry of the famished little animals so well that three we, hairless, blind creatures crept out, like newly-born rabbits, but with long tails, in the hope of meeting with their lost mamma.

Our hearts immediately warmed towards the little helpless ones, and no one wished to wreak the sins of the parents upon the orphans; and knowing that neulahs were reared as pets, I proposed to my daughter that she should select one for herself, and give the others to two of my servants. My daughter's *protégée*, however, was the only one that survived under its new régime; and Jumnie, as she called her nursing, thrived well, and soon attained its full size, knowing its name, and endearing itself to everybody by its gambols and tricks. She was like the most blithesome of little kittens, and played with our fingers, and frolicked on the sofas, sleeping occasionally behind one of the cushions, and at other times coiling herself up in her own little flannel bed.

In the course of time, however, Jumnie grew up to maturity, being one year old, and formed an attachment for one of her own race—a wild, roving bandit of a neulah, who committed such deeds of atrocity in the fowl-house as to compel us to take up arms again. If she had only made her mistress the confidant of her love!—but, alas! little did we suspect our neulah of a companionship with thieves and assassins; and so, leaving her, we thought, to her customary frolics, we

marched upon the stronghold of the enemy. Two neulahs appeared, we fired, and one fell, the other running off unscathed. We all hastened to the wounded and bleeding victim, and my little daughter first of all; but how shall I describe her grief when she saw her little Jumnie writhing at her feet in the agonies of death! If I had had the least idea of Jumnie's having formed such an attachment, I should have spared the guilty for the sake of the innocent, and Jumnie might long have lived a favourite pet; but the deed was done.

The neulahs, like other of the weasel kind—and like some animals I know of a loftier species—are very rapacious, slaying without reference to their wants; and Jumnie, although fond of milk, used to delight in the livers and brains of fowls, which she relished even after they were dressed for our table.

The natives of India never molest the neulah. They like to see it about their dwellings, on account of its snake and rat-killing propensities; and on a similar account it must have been that this creature was deified by the Egyptians, whose country abounded with reptiles, and would have been absolutely alive with crocodiles but for the havoc it made among the numerous eggs, which it delighted to suck. For this reason the ichneumons were embalmed as public benefactors, and their bodies are still found lying in state in some of the pyramids. Among the Hindoos, however, the neulah does not obtain quite such high honours, although the elephant, monkey, lion, snake, rat, goose, &c. play a prominent part in the religious myths, and are styled the *Bâhons*, or vehicles of the gods.

In Hindostan the ichneumon is not supposed to kill the crocodile, though it is in the mouth of every old woman that it possesses the knowledge of a remedy against the bite of a poisonous snake, which its instinct leads it to dig out of the ground; but this *on dit* has never been ascertained to be true, and my belief is that it is only based on the great agility and dexterity of the neulah. Eye-witnesses say that his battles with man's greatest enemy end generally in the death of the snake, which the neulah seizes by the back of the neck, and after frequent onsets at last kills and eats, rejecting nothing but the head.

The colour of the Indian neulah is a grayish-brown; but its chief beauty lies in its splendid squirrel-like tail, and lively, prominent, dark-brown eyes. Like most of the weasel kind, however, it has rather a disagreeable odour; and if it were not for this there would not be a sweeter pet in existence.

So far the experience of our Old Indian; and we now turn to another authority on the highly-curious subject just glanced at—the knowledge of the ichneumon of a specific against the poison of the snake. Calder Campbell, in his recent series of tales, 'Winter Nights'—and capital amusement for such nights they are—describes in almost a painfully truthful manner the adventure of an officer in India, who was an eye-witness, under very extraordinary circumstances, to the feat of the ichneumon. The officer, through some accident, was wandering on foot, and at night, through a desolate part of the country, and at length, overcome with fatigue, threw himself down on the dry, crisp spear-grass, and just as the first faint edge of the dawn appeared, fell asleep.

'No doubt of it! I slept soundly, sweetly—no doubt of it! I have never since then slept in the open air either soundly or sweetly, for my awaking was full of horror! Before I was fully awake, however, I had a strange perception of danger, which tied me down to the earth, warning me against all motion. I knew that there was a shadow creeping over me, beneath which to lie in dumb inaction was the wisest resource. I felt that my lower extremities were being invaded by the heavy coils of a living chain; but as if a providential opiate had been infused into my system, preventing all movement of *thew* or *sinew*, I knew not till I was

wide awake that an enormous serpent covered the whole of my nether limbs, up to the knees!

"My God! I am lost!" was the mental exclamation I made, as every drop of blood in my veins seemed turned to ice; and anon I shook like an aspen leaf, until the very fear that my sudden palsy might rouse the reptile, occasioned a revulsion of feeling, and I again lay paralysed. It slept, or at all events remained stirless; and how long it so remained I know not, for time to the fear-struck is as the ring of eternity. All at once the sky cleared up—the moon shone out—the stars glanced over me: I could see them all, as I lay stretched on my side, one hand under my head, whence I dared not remove it; neither dared I look downwards at the loathsome bedfellow which my evil stars had sent me.

'Unexpectedly, a new object of terror supervened: a curious purring sound behind me, followed by two smart taps on the ground, put the snake on the alert, for it moved, and I felt that it was crawling upwards to my breast. At that moment, when I was almost maddened by insupportable apprehension into starting up to meet perhaps certain destruction, something sprang upon my shoulder—upon the reptile! There was a shrill cry from the new assailant, a loud, appalling hiss from the serpent. For an instant I could feel them wrestling, as it were, on my body; in the next, they were beside me on the turf; in another, a few paces off, struggling, twisting round each other, fighting furiously, I beheld them—a *mongoose* or *ichneumon* and a *cobra di capello*!

'I started up; I watched that most singular combat, for all was now clear as day. I saw them stand aloof for a moment—the deep, venomous fascination of the snake's glance powerless against the keen, quick, restless orbs of its opponent: I saw this duel of the eye exchange once more for closer conflict: I saw that the *mongoose* was bitten; that it darted away, doubtless in search of that still unknown plant whose juices are its alleged antidote against snake-bite; that it returned with fresh vigour to the attack; and then, glad sight! I saw the *cobra di capello*, maimed from hooded head to scaly tail, fall lifeless from its hitherto demi-erect position with a baffled hiss; while the wonderful victor, indulging itself in a series of leaps upon the body of its antagonist, danced and bounded about, purring and spitting like an enraged cat!

'Little, graceful creature! I have ever since kept a pet *mongoose*—the most attached, the most playful, and the most frog-devouring of all animals.'

Many other authors refer to the alleged antidote against a snake-bite, known only to the *ichneumon*, and there are about as many different opinions as there are authors; but, on the whole, our Old Indian appears to us to be on the strongest side.

#### THE FAR WEST.

'The Far West,' where is the West, and what are its bounds? But a few years have passed since our thriving town (then a rude hamlet) stood upon the further confines of the rising west. Still beyond there did indeed exist an ideal realm of future greatness, a matted and mighty forest; but 'clouds and thick darkness' rested on it. But the solitude has been penetrated, the forest has been overwhelmed by the towering wave of emigration. That wave but recently spent its utmost fury ere it reached even here, and its last and dying ripple was wont to fall gently at our feet. But not so now: it has risen above, it has swept over us; and while its mighty deluge is yet running past in one undiminished current, the roar of its swelling surges, repeated by each babbling echo, is still wafted back to us upon every western breeze. Ours is no longer a western settlement; our children are surrounded by the comforts, the blessings, and the elegances of life, where their fathers found only hard-

ship, privation, want. The 'westward' is onward—still onward—but where? Even the place that was known as such but yesterday, to-morrow shall be known as no more. The tall forest, the prowling beast, and

'The stoic of the woods, the man without a tear,' are alike borne down, trampled, and destroyed by this everlasting scramble for the West.—*Buffalo paper.*

#### 'THE WAUKIN' O' THE FAULD.'

HEAVEN bless thy bonnie face, lassie!  
Heaven bless the gentle heart  
That could to you auld melody  
Sic tenderness impart!  
Awa', awa' wi' foreign airs,  
Sae artfu' but sae cauld,  
And let me hear again that sang—  
'The waukin' o' the fauld.'

And thou the singer be, lassie,  
For O thou singest weel!  
The bosom soft, to feelin' true,  
Will soon mak' others feel:  
Even my seared heart, although it's noo  
Toil-hardened, worn, an' auld,  
Grew grit as when a bairn I heard  
'The waukin' o' the fauld.'

A time may come to thee, lassie—  
But far, far be the day—  
When a strain like that will dearer seem  
Than ye might care to say;  
When thochts o' buried years will rise  
That daurna weel be tauld,  
An' ye will feel that sang like me:  
'The waukin' o' the fauld!'

C.

#### MYSTERY OF THE AMERICAN LAKES.

Lake Erie is only sixty or seventy feet deep; but the bottom of Lake Ontario, which is 452 feet deep, is 230 feet below the tide-level of the ocean, or as low as most parts of the Gulf of St. Lawrence; and the bottoms of Lakes Huron, Michigan, and Superior, although their surface is so much higher, are all, from their vast depth, on a level with the bottom of Lake Ontario. Now, as the discharge through the river Detroit, after allowing for the full probable portion carried off by evaporation, does not appear by any means equal to the quantity of water which the three upper great lakes receive, it has been conjectured that a subterranean river may run from Lake Superior to Huron, and from Huron to Lake Ontario. This conjecture is by no means improbable, and will account for the singular fact that salmon and herring are caught in all the lakes communicating with the St. Lawrence, but in no others. As the Falls of Niagara must have always existed, it would puzzle the naturalist to say how these fish got into the upper lakes without some such subterranean river; moreover, any periodical obstruction of this river would furnish a not improbable solution of the mysterious flux and reflux of the lakes.—*Dublin University Magazine.*

#### SPICK AND SPAN NEW.

'Spick and span new' is a corruption from the Italian *spicata de la spanna*—snatched from the hand—fresh from the mint; and was coined probably when the English were as much infatuated with Italian fashions as they now are with French.

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